

THE PROCEEDINGS  
*of*  
THE SOUTH CAROLINA  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION  
1948

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THE PROCEEDINGS  
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ROBERT D. OCHS

*Editor*

COLUMBIA  
THE SOUTH CAROLINA  
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## THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING

The eighteenth annual meeting of the South Carolina Historical Association was held at Clemson College on April 3, 1948. J. Harold Wolfe, President of the Association, presided.

At the luncheon business meeting the Treasurer's report was read and accepted. Officers chosen for 1948-49 were: Lillian Kibler, President; R. H. Wienefeld, Vice-President; Thomas B. Alexander, Secretary-Treasurer; Nancy McIntosh, Executive Committee Member. The Association members present unanimously directed the President to appoint a committee to draft a resolution requesting the Senate of South Carolina to sustain the gubernatorial veto of certain items in the appropriation bill pertaining to the South Carolina Historical Commission. A committee was appointed consisting of: J. M. Lesesne, Lillian Kibler, and W. C. Overton. A motion was adopted directing the Secretary to forward a copy of the resolution to each state senator.

Two papers were read at the afternoon session: "Nativism in American Journalism, 1784-1814" by D. H. Gilpatrick of Furman University; and "Ante-bellum Planters and Their Means of Transportation" by L. F. Brewster of East Carolina Teachers College.

The evening banquet session heard a paper by Charles M. Wiltse of Washington, D. C., on "John C. Calhoun—An Interpretation."

The Executive Committee designated Columbia for the 1949 meeting, continued Robert D. Ochs as editor of the *Proceedings of the Association*, and recommended a morning session for the 1949 meeting.

# NATIVISM IN AMERICAN JOURNALISM 1784-1814

D. H. GILPATRICK

On August 12, 1805, the *Minerva*, a staunch Federalist newspaper, published in Raleigh, North Carolina, uttered a bitter editorial complaint against foreign-born editors in the United States. These the *Minerva* described (mentioning six of them by name) as individuals who had "fled from the gallows in Europe" and "cheated Botany Bay of her rights."<sup>1</sup> The same paper went on to express its editorial indignation that these unwelcome émigrés had now "turned patriots" and actually had the temerity to dictate to native-born Americans in matters political. Such complaints were rather general in the Federalist press of the period. However, these evidences of hostility to the so-called "foreign scribblers" were not confined by any means to the newspapers. They appeared in a number of forms. In the same year, in another section of the country and through another medium the foreign-born editors were held up to scorn and derision. A Federalist poet writing in Boston under the name of Christopher Caustic paid his respects both to Thomas Jefferson and to the expatriate journalists who were supporting him:

And now their Chief, with other fetches  
Employs a gang of foreign wretches  
To lie down every man of merit  
Of honesty and public spirit.

Gives foreigners our loaves and fishes  
To bend out counsels to his wishes  
T' assassinate the reputation  
Of those who built us to a nation.

Fellows, who sped away betimes,  
To seek 'asylum' for their crimes,  
In annals of Old Bailey, noted,  
Are in *Fredonia* promoted.

Vile renegades of every nation  
Are sure to gain an elevation,  
But honesty and reputation  
Are passports to a private station.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Typical editorials against foreign born journalists can be found in: *Augusta (Ga.) Herald*, Nov. 17, 1802, Feb. 9, 1803, March 7, 1804, July 26, 1805; *Frederick (Md.) Town Herald*, Aug. 28, Sept. 11, Dec. 25, 1802, Aug. 20, 1803; *Salem (Mass.) Gazette*, Apr. 10, 1813.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Green Fessenden, *Democracy Unveiled or Tyranny Stripped of the Garb of Patriotism* (Boston, 1805), pp. 77-80.

An English traveler at about the same time observed "*The scurrility of the press* is deplored even by [the Americans] themselves; and is unfortunately too much in the hands of *European traitors* who have fled to escape the punishment due to their crimes."<sup>3</sup> A more specific indictment was supplied from the same source:

Mr. Jefferson also, by his patronage of Duane, the Irish editor of the *Aurora*, and [by] giving him a colonel's commission in the new regular army that he raised, has considerably lessened himself in the esteem to the respectable part of the American people.<sup>4</sup>

Similar comments are to be found in the Federalist literary magazines of the time. Even into a book review it was possible to insert strictures on refugee printers in the Jeffersonian service. One reviewer in 1811 noted:

A certified copy of the recorder of Old Bailey is decisive testimony of transatlantic patriotism . . . . That venerable mansion has often been the asylum of 'oppressed humanity,' and there seems a sort of sympathy between modern patriotism on this side of the Atlantic, and the walls of that august university on the other. The streams of Isis and of Cam although sparkling and transparent, are often peculiarly inhospitable to the growth of the noble plant, designated freedom; but the moment it is fed by the redundant fountain of Old Bailey, it starts up into wild, luxuriant and exuberant foliage.<sup>5</sup>

A large number of these alien printers of whom the Federalists complained so bitterly had arrived on these shores in the decade of the 1790's and it is in part against them and their writings that the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 were aimed. In the congressional debates on the passage of these laws the terms "renegade foreigners" and "treasonable" press were often employed. James Bayard, Delaware Federalist, dwelt at length on "aliens who are fugitives from justice on charges of treason and sedition" and he doubted whether these "exotics" who had "notoriously opposed" their former government could ever give loyal support to another government.<sup>6</sup> John Allen, Connecticut Federalist, serving his one and only term in Congress, stressed the need for the Sedition Act as far as newspapers were concerned. He quoted from the *Aurora* of Duane and from the *New York Time Piece*, then edited by John Daly Burk, an Irish refugee who had arrived in this country in 1795.<sup>7</sup> On the

<sup>3</sup> John Lambert, *Travels through Canada and the United States of North America in the Years 1806, 1807, and 1808* (London, 1814), II, 319.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 369.

<sup>5</sup> "A Review of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, A Satire by Lord Byron", *Port Folio* (May, 1811), p. 439.

<sup>6</sup> *Annals of Congress*, 5 Cong., p. 1966.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2093-2099.

other hand, Joseph McDowell of North Carolina stated that the Federalists would do well to investigate a certain "British printer" of Philadelphia who was "generally supposed to be in the pay of the British Minister," and whose paper contained "more libels and lies than any other in the United States."<sup>8</sup> This pointed reference was to William Cobbett, the well-known Peter Porcupine, also an expatriate of the 1790's, but one who used his talents for the Federalists rather than the Republicans. After the Alien and Sedition Acts became laws there were a number of prosecutions under the latter act and the victims were mainly of foreign birth although several of them were not primarily journalists.<sup>9</sup> No alien was deported under the Alien Act, although a number of French did leave about the time of its passage. President John Adams expressed a willingness to have it operate in the case of William Duane of the *Aurora*.<sup>10</sup> Duane, however, was of American birth. Timothy Pickering thought regarding the Irish John Daly Burk, editor of Boston's first daily paper, that "no man is a fitter subject for the operation of the Alien Act"; but, averred Pickering, it might be better to first punish Burk under the Sedition Act for his libels and then send him away under the Alien Act.<sup>11</sup> Burk, however, judiciously went into hiding, was not deported, and later turned up in Virginia.

Two years after the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts the Federalist party was defeated in the national election of 1800. John Adams had an explanation for this defeat and he set it forth in a letter to Benjamin Stoddert on March 31, 1801:

If we had been blessed with common sense, we should not have been overthrown by Philip Freneau, Duane, Callender, Cooper, and Lyon, or their great patron and protector. A group of foreign liars, encouraged by a few ambitious native gentlemen, have discomfited the education, the talents, the virtues, and the property of the country.<sup>12</sup>

Two weeks later Adams wrote in similar vein to Christopher Gadsden of South Carolina:

'Foreign meddlers,' as you properly denominate them, have a strange, a mysterious influence in this country. Is there no pride in American bosoms? Can their hearts endure that Callender, Duane, Cooper, and Lyon, should be the most influential men in the country, all foreigners and all degraded characters.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2107.

<sup>9</sup> F. M. Anderson, "The Enforcement of the Alien and Sedition Laws," *American Historical Association Report*, 1912 (Washington, 1914), pp. 120-122.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 116.

<sup>12</sup> John Adams, *Works* (Boston, 1850-56), IX, 582.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 584.

In the eyes of Federalists the foreign-born editors were the causes of the most of the woes that befell the country. The second war with England was no exception. The lower house of the Massachusetts legislature declared in reply to a speech of Governor Strong, "The real cause of the war must be traced to . . . the influence of *worthless foreigners* over the press, and [over] the deliberations of the government in all its branches."<sup>14</sup> A little earlier a Salem newspaper had likewise indicted the "worthless foreigners" somewhat more specifically and at greater length:

The jealous potentates of Europe place around their persons a corps of foreign mercenary troops on whose subserviency and fidelity they may confidently rely:—Bonaparte has his Mamelukes, and the Grand Sultan his Janizaries; so our democratic Presidents have their Swiss and Walloon Guards . . . Col. Binns, the Irishman can deride New England as 'the land of Codfish and Onions'—Col. Duane scoffs our merchants (as the worthless part of the community)—Gales, Baptiste Irvine . . . and others are the soldiers of fortune; and patriotic Volunteers who are to defend government from the people and compel native citizens to feel how great a misfortune it was to be born in their native land.<sup>15</sup>

The foregoing are only a few illustrations of complaints from native-born Federalists against the "vile renegades" or "transatlantic partisans," who had fled from the Old World, come to America, and joined the opposition press. At this point it might be well to note the causes of their flight and to attempt a slight appraisal of their services to their adopted land.

In late eighteenth century England the lot of the printer was not a happy one. Prior to 1792 almost any complaint against the government or its officials was branded a "seditious libel" and its author inevitably faced prosecution. Ordinarily Fox's Libel Act of 1792 would have made the position of the printer less precarious, but by that time the Pitt administration was so apprehensive regarding the possible infiltration of French revolutionary ideas that a whole set of repressive measures was enacted so that criticisms of the government or suggestions for reform were considered seditious. A member of the parliament had advised his colleagues "not to repair their house in the hurricane season" and this advice was literally followed.<sup>16</sup> The redoubtable

<sup>14</sup> *The Olive Branch* (Philadelphia, 1815), p. 331.

<sup>15</sup> Salem (Mass.) *Gazette*, April 10, 1813, quoted in Joseph T. Buckingham, *Specimens of Newspaper Literature with Personal Memoirs, Anecdotes, and Reminiscences* (Boston, 1850), II, 133.

<sup>16</sup> Speech of Lord Windham quoted in J. H. Rose, *Life of William Pitt* (New York, 1924), II, 11.

Francis Place has described the difficulties of the printers of this period:

The press was kept in constant apprehension of prosecution for the publication of words which either the Government or some members of the Aristocracy 'might for some reason dislike' or for which the Attorney General might be directed to bring before the Court of the King's Bench on an Indictment or by 'Ex-Officio Information for libel.'<sup>17</sup>

John Almon, well-known printer, parliamentary reporter, and book-seller of Piccadilly adds confirmation when he advises English fathers to train their sons to be tinkers rather than printers because "the laws of tin he can understand, but the law of libels is unwritten, uncertain and undefinable."<sup>18</sup>

In Ireland, even though that turbulent land was experiencing a period of semi-autonomy from 1782 to 1801, the lot of the printer was little better. The historian, Lecky, described it as "one of considerable danger and perplexity."<sup>19</sup> Mathew Carey who fled to the United States in 1784 gives ample proof of this state of affairs when he records the end of his paper, the *Volunteers Journal* of Dublin, after a career of six months which Carey termed "enthusiastic and violent."<sup>20</sup> Perhaps the best statement on this matter came from Joseph Gales, later editor of the *Raleigh Register* and the founder of a printing dynasty in America. Gales observed that he had for some time desired "to try his fortune in the more congenial clime of the new Western Republic" and he definitely decided to emigrate when in 1794 the British government created a situation whereby "every Printer who advocated the cause of Freedom and the People became the object of Ministerial violence."<sup>21</sup> Gales was only one of many who found it desirable to escape this "Ministerial violence."<sup>22</sup>

The list of these expatriate journalists is a long one and only a few of them can be noticed in this paper. Some of them made valuable contributions to the life of their adopted country and a rather imposing list of "firsts" in various fields of journalism could be set down to their credit. On the other hand, others added mainly to the political turbulence of the current scene and

<sup>17</sup> Place Manuscript Collection (British Museum), XXXVI, Introduction.

<sup>18</sup> John Almon, *Memoirs of John Almon, Bookseller of Piccadilly* (London, 1790), p. 36.

<sup>19</sup> W. E. H. Lecky, *A History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1887), III, 248.

<sup>20</sup> Mathew Carey, "Autobiography," *New England Magazine*, V (Boston, 1833), 409.

<sup>21</sup> Josephine Seaton, *William Winston Seaton* (Boston, 1871), p. 60. Mrs. Seaton was Gale's granddaughter.

<sup>22</sup> *Raleigh (N. C.) Register*, Dec. 10, 1804.

helped merely to augment the extreme vituperation of the press of the time.

Two of the group who really made contributions came to these shores in the 1780's. John Miller came to South Carolina from England in 1783 and Mathew Carey came to Pennsylvania from Ireland in 1784. Both encountered difficulties in their early days in America and both were branded as foreigners by rival printers. John Miller had been five times in the toils of the law in London.<sup>23</sup> He landed in Baltimore in early 1783 and went on to Philadelphia, where the South Carolina delegates in Congress (probably due in part to Miller's friendship for Henry Laurens while Laurens was immured in the Tower of London) recommended to Governor Guerard that Miller be chosen the state printer for South Carolina.<sup>24</sup> On February 22, 1783 Miller was chosen for this office by the South Carolina legislature.<sup>25</sup> On March 15, 1783 Miller's *South Carolina Gazette and General Advertiser*, a bi-weekly, made its first appearance. On December 1, 1784 it became a daily, the first one in South Carolina. Miller had been classed as a radical in England, but in South Carolina his paper showed somewhat conservative tendencies. He often refused publication to some of the more radical contributions. For this and for his foreign birth he was frequently denounced in a rival paper. This rival paper, the *Gazette of South Carolina*, had been revived in July 1783 by Mrs. Ann Timothy, widow of the former editor whose family had long been identified with South Carolina newspapers. Late in 1784 it was hinted in the Timothy paper that the legislature might well "give preference to an American press."<sup>26</sup> This was prophetic because in March 1785 the South Carolina legislature resolved "That Mrs. Ann Timothy be appointed *Printer to the State* in consequences of the services rendered by her late husband."<sup>27</sup> Soon afterwards Miller left Charleston for Pendleton where, in 1807, he established *Miller's Weekly Messenger* which soon became the Pendleton (S.C.) *Messenger*, a pioneer work in up-country journalism.

At the time, when Miller was being replaced by a "native" press in South Carolina, Mathew Carey was having his diffi-

<sup>23</sup> D. H. Gilpatrick, "The English Background of John Miller," *Furman Bulletin* (January, 1938), pp. 14-20.

<sup>24</sup> *Pennsylvania Packet*, Jan. 16, 1783 carries a long account of Miller.

<sup>25</sup> *Journal of the South Carolina Senate*, 1783, pp. 185 and 241; *Journal of the South Carolina House of Representatives*, 1783, pp. 204-205.

<sup>26</sup> "A True Born American," *Gazette of the State of South Carolina*, Dec. 13, 1784.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, March 14, 1785.

culties in Philadelphia. Here Colonel Eleazer Oswald, a Revolutionary soldier of some distinction and the owner of the *Independent Gazeteer*, was endeavoring to keep Carey from acquiring a printing press.<sup>28</sup> Colonel Oswald, alarmed by the influx of foreigners into Pennsylvania, maintained a policy of nativism in his paper which declared, "No office of honor, trust, or profit in the United States for any person of foreign birth."<sup>29</sup> Oswald carried on a bitter attack against foreigners in general and against Carey in particular.<sup>30</sup> A duel between these two took place in 1786 and Carey nearly lost his life.<sup>31</sup> However, despite initial setbacks, Carey was soon publishing a newspaper in Philadelphia and before the end of the year 1786 he had embarked in his business of magazine publishing for which he later became so well known. Ironically enough, Colonel Oswald's paper was sold just ten years later by his widow, to another expatriate, Joseph Gales, who published the *Independent Gazeteer* for a short time before he went to North Carolina.

Carey was destined to be an important figure in the history of American publishing. One of his contributions was the inauguration of a "book fair" in Philadelphia. The Federalist press, as might be expected, scoffed at such an innovation made by an "imported patriot." In 1802, a Maryland paper, arch-Federalist in its politics, carried a letter which denounced Jefferson and his army of foreign scribes. They were called "atheists, deists, illuminati, scoundrels and villains of Europe." It was suggested that Jefferson bring over some more such villains and "join these with Palmer, the President of the Society of the Illuminati of New York, with Driscol the infidel and publisher of the Temple of Reason, with Cheetham, Duane, Gallatin, and all the fugitives from Justice . . . let him engage the democratic Mathew Carey of Philadelphia, the institutor of the literary fair, and the President's bellman and organ Duane, to cry out at their next fair, 'the Age of Reason, dog cheap, dog cheap, 3c a dozen'."<sup>32</sup> This paper, the Frederick (Md.) *Town Herald*, carried on a bitter campaign against all foreign editors. An editorial on Christmas day, 1802, reached the climax and a few phrases will indicate its violence. It denounced "the impudence of a certain description of Foreigners in officiously intermeddling with our political affairs" and called them "the seditious and disaffected, who . . . were cor-

<sup>28</sup> M. Carey, *op. cit.*, IV, 491.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted in Kenneth Wyer Rowe, *Mathew Carey, A Study in Economic Development* (Baltimore, 1933), p. 16.

<sup>30</sup> M. Carey, *op. cit.*, pp. 491-492.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 492-496.

<sup>32</sup> Frederick (Md.) *Town Herald*, Oct. 2, 1802.

rupted with the demoniacal spirit of disorganization," and "unprincipled *patriots* carrying with them the political venom." It concluded with stating that it was "the duty of every sincere lover of the public weal to unmask the profligacy and wickedness [and] the insidious influence of these *imported patriots*."<sup>33</sup>

The greater part of these "imported patriots" came over in the 1790's. One of the first to come was William Cobbett, the famous Peter Porcupine. As was well known, he was an exception to the rule because he used his talents for the Federalists. He had criticised many things in England, especially the English army in 1792 before he came into collision with the law.<sup>34</sup> In America, he might have remained an unnoticed teacher of languages had not his anger been aroused by the glorification of France by the Republican presses and by the encomiums heaped on Doctor Joseph Priestly when the great scientist came to the United States in 1794. These two things brought Cobbett into the arena of partisan journalism and for some time he bitterly attacked the Republicans and praised the Federalists. Toward the end of the decade Cobbett returned to England where, as he put it, "neither the moth of Democracy nor the rust of Federalism doth corrupt."<sup>35</sup> It might appear somewhat inconsistent for the Federalists, who spent so much time in denouncing the foreign-born printers used by the Republicans, to employ a foreigner themselves. For this Benjamin Russell, an outstanding New England Federalist editor, had an explanation:

Cobbett was never encouraged and supported by the Federalists as a solid judicious writer in their cause; but was merely kept to hunt Jacobin *foxes*, *skunks*, and *serpents*. The Federalists found the Jacobins had the *Aurora*, *Argus*, and *Chronicle* through which they ejected their mud, filth and venom and attacked and blackened the best characters the world ever boasted; and they perceived that these vermin were not to be operated on by reason or decency. It was therefore thought necessary that the opposite party should keep, and *feed a suitable beast* to hunt down these *skunks* and *foxes*; and 'the fretful Porcupine' was selected for this business . . .<sup>36</sup>

Shortly after the "fretful Porcupine" had become so annoyed by the hearty welcome accorded to Doctor Priestly, a friend of Priestly's voluntarily migrated to America. This was none other than Thomas Cooper, later to be the president of the South Carolina College. Cooper was not primarily a journalist and his

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 25, 1802.

<sup>34</sup> G. D. H. Cole, *Life of William Cobbett* (New York, 1924), pp. 28-39.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>36</sup> *Columbian Sentinel*, April 10, 1799, quoted in W. G. Bleyer, *Main Currents in the History of American Journalism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), p. 119.

newspaper career lasted less than two months in 1799 when he served as temporary editor of the *Sunbury and Northumberland Gazette* in Pennsylvania. This was long enough, however, for Cooper to voice his wrath against the Adams administration and to bring down upon his head a prosecution under the Sedition Act.<sup>37</sup> Federalists generally included Cooper in their lists of "imported patriots." The *Philadelphia Gazette* often bracketed Cooper with Thomas Callender and William Duane and this Federalist journal was ready and willing to supply for its readers ample biographical data on the three men.<sup>38</sup>

The temptation for Federalist editors to dwell upon the European backgrounds of their Republican competitors was particularly strong in the case of the scurrilous Thomas Callender who had arrived in the United States at about the same time as Cooper. Callender had been in trouble in Scotland because he had published in 1792 *The Political Progress of Great Britain*. When he had failed to appear for trial for this libel the "sentence of fugitation and outlawry" had been pronounced against him.<sup>39</sup> In his early years in America, Callender had written for the Jeffersonians; but, when he failed to receive the postmastership at Richmond as a reward for his aid, he turned against them and was soon giving aid and comfort to the Federalists. Perhaps he too was employed to hunt the "Jacobinie skunks, and serpents."

William Duane, famous editor of the *Aurora*, returned to the United States in 1795. Duane was born in the United States of Irish parentage. At an early age he was taken to Ireland and there he had become a printer. His Irish background would cause him in Federalist eyes to qualify for the ranks of imported patriots. He had spent some time in India where he printed the *Indian World* at Calcutta. His too frank criticism of the methods of the British East India Company brought to a close his journalistic career in that distant land. While in India, some of Duane's more violent antagonists had ridden him on a pole. For years Federalist editors featured this story of the "Calcutta pole." Seven years after Duane's return to the United States, a Maryland paper was printing various versions of the story.<sup>40</sup> Duane's services to the Republican party are too well known to require

<sup>37</sup> Dumas Malone, *The Public Life of Thomas Cooper* (New Haven, 1926), pp. 91, 92, 101 and 104-106; Anderson, *op. cit.*

<sup>38</sup> D. Malone, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-117, for quotations from *Philadelphia Gazette*.

<sup>39</sup> T. Howell and William Cobbett, *A Complete Collection of State Trials* (London, 1809-1826), XVIII, 80.

<sup>40</sup> Baltimore (Md.) *Republican*, Nov. 24, 1802.

elaboration. Federalist attacks on him (with full biographical detail) are in direct proportion to the extent of these services.

In the years 1795 and 1796, there came to America three more refugee journalists whose attainments in their adopted land tended to raise somewhat the average of the group. All three of them enlisted in Jeffersonian ranks but, with slight exceptions, their writings do not descend to the level of the outpourings of Callender, Duane or Cobbett, and perhaps for that reason they are not so well known. The three new arrivals were John Daly Burk, Joseph Gales, and Joseph Charless. Burk became the editor of the *Polar Star*, the first daily paper of Boston, made some really important contributions to early American drama<sup>41</sup> and, eventually, wrote a history of Virginia. Joseph Gales founded the Raleigh (N. C.) *Register* and was long a powerful force in North Carolina politics.<sup>42</sup> His son and son-in-law were for many years editors of the *National Intelligencer*. Joseph Charless, in 1808, set up the first newspaper in St. Louis and was for that community what would be called in modern parlance a first-rate "booster." Burk and Charles had been involved in political troubles in Ireland and Joseph Gales in his *Sheffield Register* had been too critical of the British government. He had been *persona non grata* because he had essayed to print some of the writings of Thomas Paine.<sup>43</sup> In their adopted land these three men were to be the objects of Federalist attack and their foreign backgrounds were duly chronicled by their rivals.

In 1798, another refugee arrived. This was James Cheetham who had participated in riots in Manchester.<sup>44</sup> He became the editor of the strongly Republican *American Citizen* in New York. Rival papers, especially the New York *Evening Post*, found Cheetham's turbulent Manchester background excellent "copy."<sup>45</sup>

The opening of the 19th century brought two Irish refugees who were to render journalistic services to the party of Jefferson. These were Dennis Driscoll and John Binns. Dennis Driscoll in Ireland had been editor of the *Cork Gazette* and because of his

<sup>41</sup> A. H. Quinn, *A History of the American Drama* (New York, 1923), p. 126.

<sup>42</sup> D. H. Gilpatrick, *Jeffersonian Democracy in North Carolina* (New York, 1931), pp. 104-105, 108-109, 129, 136-142 and 171-172.

<sup>43</sup> J. Seaton, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48 and 55.

<sup>44</sup> John Wood, *A Full Exposition of the Clintonian Faction and the Society of the Columbian Illuminati* (Newark, 1802), p. 11; T. J. Howell and W. Cobbett, *op. cit.*, XXIII, 1079-1080 and 1165.

<sup>45</sup> John W. Francis, *Old New York, Reminiscences of the Past Sixty Years* (New York, 1858), pp. 335-338.

<sup>46</sup> *Cork Gazette*, April 26, 1794, Dec. 17, 28, 1796, and April 22, 1797.

espousal of French revolutionary principles, among other things, he had been thrown into jail.<sup>46</sup> He had also once been a Catholic priest but later became a pronounced Deist. Soon after his arrival in America he became the editor of a Deist paper, the *Temple of Reason*. All of this was grist for the Federalist mill. In 1804 Driscoll became editor of the *Augusta Chronicle* in Georgia and the Federalist rival, the *Augusta Herald*, was soon giving biographical data on Driscoll with special emphasis on his varied religious background. John Binns, in telling the story of his life, stated that he had been "the inhabitant of many a prison."<sup>47</sup> In America, he first joined Cooper and Priestly in Northumberland, Pennsylvania, but, in 1807, he moved to Philadelphia where he established his paper, so long a valued aid to the Republicans, the *Democratic Press*. This, so Binns relates, was the first newspaper rash enough to use the word "Democratic" in its title, and Binns also adds that even William Duane had scruples regarding the wisdom of its use.<sup>48</sup> Apparently the paper did not suffer because it was still active—and violent—when Andrew Jackson became president.

Other names could be added to this list of émigrés, but space forbids. Their careers and the worth of their journalistic efforts offer a wide variety. However, they were all targets for Federalist rivals who generally featured their foreign birth and their departure from their native lands. Often the refugees retaliated by stating that the Federalist editors had nothing but American birth to commend them, and sometimes they went a step further and criticised the Federalist editors' devotion to England and hinted of Toryism. The refugees were generally most enthusiastic about their adopted country. Perhaps they were not all as eloquent as John Daly Burk who wrote in 1796, "From the moment a stranger puts his foot on the soil of America, his fetters are rent in pieces, and the scales of servitude, which he had contracted under European tyrannies, fall off; he becomes a free man."<sup>49</sup> Within two years the United States was seeking Burk's deportation under the Alien Act! However, the Federalist party was soon to retire and the avenues of advancements would open more freely for the "imported patriots."

In 1810, Dennis Driscoll stated editorially in his *Augusta Chronicle* that "having been these eighteen years past, both in

<sup>47</sup> John Binns, *Recollections* (Philadelphia, 1854), p. 11.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>49</sup> Charles Campbell, *Some Materials to Serve for a Brief Memoir of John Daly Burk* (Albany, 1868), p. 20; J. Buckingham, *op. cit.*, p. 295. These words appeared in the first issue of the *Polar Star*, Oct. 6, 1796.

the Old and New Country fighting the battles of Republicanism"<sup>50</sup> he had sustained many physical infirmities and so was desirous of retiring and was offering his paper for sale. Within five months he was dead. His obituary stated that "during his frequent vicissitudes" he had been "the uniform, steady, and zealous friend of Liberty and mankind."<sup>51</sup> Perhaps this would be a fitting appraisal of the majority of his refugee colleagues.

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<sup>50</sup> *Augusta (Ga.) Chronicle*, Oct. 10, 1810.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, March 15, 1811.

## ANTE-BELLUM PLANTERS AND THEIR MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

LAWRENCE FAY BREWSTER

### I

South Carolina planters had always had to deal with problems of transportation. Such problems were involved in every movement of goods and persons to and from the plantations. In ante-bellum times, as the situation with respect to trade became more complex and as the planters became a migratory people—entire families and households leaving their plantations at regular intervals every year in search of health and pleasure—the planters became more concerned about means of transportation.<sup>1</sup>

From the earliest times the river planters had their own boats, which were used for the transportation of persons, for the hauling of equipment and supplies, and for sport and pleasure. These boats were of various kinds, sizes, and degrees of sumptuousness. There were piraguas, skiffs, and other rowboats; rafts, "flats," lighters, and barges; sloops and schooners.

The Ball Family of Comingtee Plantation, it is said, often went to Charleston on the plantation sloop, the hold of which was converted into a cabin to accommodate the passengers when the boat was becalmed or making slow progress against the wind.<sup>2</sup> This Comingtee craft was but one of many sailboats that moved up and down the Cooper River between the rice fields of their owners.<sup>3</sup> South Santee River planters used three- and four-oared boats with auxiliary sails in going back and forth between their plantations and their Cedar Island resort.<sup>4</sup> The R. F. W. Allstons required a number of boats in removing from Chicora Wood to Canaan Seashore.<sup>5</sup> Members of the family used

<sup>1</sup> See Lawrence Fay Brewster, *Summer Migrations and Resorts of South Carolina Low-Country Planters. Historical Papers of Trinity College Historical Society, Ser. XXVI* (Durham, 1947).

<sup>2</sup> Anne Simons Deas, *Recollections of the Ball Family of South Carolina and the Comingtee Plantation* (Summerfield, S. C., ca. 1909), p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Edward Terry Hendri Shaffer, *Carolina Gardens* (Chapel Hill, 1939), p. 79, citing Dr. John B. Irving's *A Day on Cooper River* (Charleston, 1842).

<sup>4</sup> David Doar, *Rice and Rice Planting in the South Carolina Low Country. Contributions from the Charleston Museum, VIII*. Edited by E. Milby Burton (Charleston, 1936), p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Waties Allston Pringle, *Chronicles of Chicora Wood* (New York, 1922), pp. 67-71.

a rowboat, while "great flats," 60 feet, or larger, carried the servants and the necessary household paraphernalia—"vehicles, horses, cows, furniture, bedding, trunks, provisions"—down the Pee Dee River and into the Waccamaw by way of Squirrel Creek and thence to the wharf at Waverly Plantation, a distance of seven miles. There, horses, ready saddled for the four-mile ride to the seashore, awaited the family. Removing for the summer of 1838 to Edingsville on Edisto Island, John B. Grimbald of St. Paul's Parish transported his "things" by sloop but the family and horses and carriage went by steamer.<sup>6</sup>

Besides the boats maintained by the planters for their private use, there were also being operated in South Carolina waters public carriers of different kinds and variously propelled —by pole, sail and steam. Planters patronized some of these carriers and some planters became interested in improved water ways. They took part with the residents of Charleston and the dwellers along the Santee, Congaree, Saluda and Broad Rivers who in 1770 petitioned the Legislature for a canal to connect the Santee and Cooper Rivers; and they put their Negroes to work digging during the depression years while the canal was being built (1792-1800).<sup>7</sup> Their cotton went to make up the more than 70,000 bales the canal carried in some years prior to the 1840's when it gradually lost out to the railroads. Other canals were constructed and river navigation improved as part of the program of internal improvements authorized by the Legislature in 1818. These included the Columbia Canal, for the construction of which Irish laborers were imported to replace the Negroes who could not be spared from the plantations when the planters were doing well. As a result of these improvements, boats could carry cotton to Charleston from every district of the State except Greenville.

Most of the river and canal traffic both below and above the fall line had been downstream because of the difficulties of poling back upstream; the boats—"the high-sided 'cotton-box'" and "the long narrow canal flats"—frequently were sold as lumber when they reached their destination.<sup>8</sup> Some freight boats, however, had maintained regular service up and down the rivers, as many as twenty running between Charleston and the Congaree in 1796. Steamboats, handicapped by their dependence on the

<sup>6</sup> John B. Grimbald Diary (transcript, College of Charleston Library), Entries for May 11 and 13, 1838.

<sup>7</sup> David Duncan Wallace, *The History of South Carolina* (New York, 1934), II, 399-401.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 401-402.

stage of river and canal on all streams but those of the Pee Dee system, were used on the inland waters of the State. Charleston was connected by steamers with Augusta, Granby (Columbia), and Camden from the 1820's. Yankee and Carolina coasters and rice boats, both sail and steam, carried cargoes from Georgetown and Beaufort to Charleston.<sup>9</sup> In 1832 a number of boats, including two steamers, were plying between Georgetown and Society Hill.<sup>10</sup>

Increasing use was made of the ferries connecting Charleston with the neighboring sea-island and mainland resorts. This fact is well illustrated by the ferries to Sullivan's Island. Individual ferrymen in rowboats and sailboats were supplemented by steam-boats in making the four-mile run from the City to the Island's oldest settlement, Moultrieville.<sup>11</sup> At first the ferries did not make frequent trips to the Island nor transport large numbers of passengers. The steamer *Etiwan*, in the early years of its service, is said to have left Adger's Wharf at four o'clock in the afternoon to carry over a comparatively small and select company.<sup>12</sup> By 1850 several ferries were maintaining regular hourly schedules between Charleston and Sullivan's Island and Mount Pleasant, a mainland resort in Christ Church Parish. Hillard's Line operated ferries from the City from 7 A.M. to 7 P.M. and from the Island from 5 P.M. to 8 P.M., stopping at Mount Pleasant.<sup>13</sup> A new line, advertised by Robertson and Blacklock in the *Courier* of July 3, 1852, offered direct service to the Island. The steamer *Colonel Myers*, built in Charleston for the line and commanded by Captain Thomas Paine, made frequent trips between Fitzsimons Wharf and the Island. Beginning July 5, the *Myers*, together with the *Charleston*, Captain Charles J. Relyea, master, was to operate on a more complete schedule. The proprietors announced that having heard reports that it was a practice for the ships of the two lines running to the Island to race each other, they "deem it proper to state that racing is positively prohibited by this Company, and that Captain Paine's discretion and caution in the management of steamboats is well known to this com-

<sup>9</sup> J. H. Easterby, ed., *The South Carolina Rice Plantation as Revealed in the Papers of Robert F. W. Allston* (Chicago, 1945), 10, 39-40, and for specific mention of boats used by Allston and others, *passim*.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas P. Lockwood, *A Geography of South Carolina* (Charleston, 1832), p. 46.

<sup>11</sup> [John B. Irving] *Local Events and Incidents at Home* (Charleston, 1850), p. 1; Katherine Drayton Simons, *Stories of Charleston Harbor* (Columbia, 1830), pp. 13-14.

<sup>12</sup> The correspondent "Battery" in the *Lancaster Ledger*, August 3, 1853.

<sup>13</sup> Irving, *Local Events*, p. 1; advertisement by George F. Kinloch, agent, in *Charleston Courier*, July 3, 1852.

munity." The fare in 1850 was ten cents; the trip to Mount Pleasant took about twenty minutes and to the Island about thirty minutes.<sup>14</sup> These steamers were then carrying large numbers of passengers, including planters taking their families to resorts or going to inspect their plantations. Hundreds were reported to visit the Island hourly. According to Irving, "thousands upon thousands," the number nearly doubling every month, used the Hillard Line during the spring and summer, bringing to the Company "a handsome revenue and profit" over and above that derived from the freight charges on the planters' crops and supplies. Charleston steamers made regular or special trips to other points nearby. The "safe and expeditious" *Governor Aiken* carried passengers to Fort Johnson, to Morris Island, to Matthew's Ferry in Christ Church Parish, and up the Wando River; and the veteran *Etiwan* maintained service between Charleston and Edingsville.<sup>15</sup>

Since Colonial times South Carolina planters had shipped goods and traveled by sea to Europe and to the North. They were among the more than 260 South Carolinians who in the years 1767-1775 sailed on the packets which plied regularly between Charleston and Newport, Rhode Island.<sup>16</sup> This traffic continued after the Revolution. John Blake White wrote of sailing from Newport to Charleston with Eliza Allston in November, 1804.<sup>17</sup> Mrs. Floride Bonneau Calhoun and her niece returned to Charleston on the packet *William Henry* in April, 1807, after spending the previous winter in Newport.<sup>18</sup> F. A. Michaux, the French physician, scientist and traveler, who sailed from Charleston to New York in 1802, found the boat "tastefully fitted up and conveniently arranged for the reception of passengers."<sup>19</sup> The fare was \$40 or \$50. The vessels of these early years, while fairly well fitted up, were not large.<sup>20</sup> Sloops or schooners, varying somewhat in size, they seldom carried more than thirty passengers. Sailings depended on cargoes, passengers and weather conditions. From three to five days were required to go from Charleston to Wilmington or Savannah; ten days to Philadel-

<sup>14</sup> Irving, *Local Events*, p. 2; *Lancaster Ledger*, August 3, 1853.

<sup>15</sup> Irving, *Local Events*, pp. 2-3; *Charleston Courier*, June 8, 1852.

<sup>16</sup> Carl Bridenbaugh, "Charlestonians at Newport, 1767-1775," *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, XLI (April, 1940), 43-47.

<sup>17</sup> Mabel L. Webber, ed., "Records from the Blake and White Bibles," *SCHGM*, XXXVI (July, 1935), 90.

<sup>18</sup> A. S. Salley, "Calhoun Family of South Carolina," *SCHGM*, VII (1906), 154 n., citing *Charleston Courier*, April 24, 1807.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Seymour Dunbar, *A History of Travel in America* (New York, 1937), p. 324.

<sup>20</sup> Gaillard Hunt, *Life in America One Hundred Years Ago* (New York, 1914), p. 54.

phia or New York; and twelve to fourteen days to Newport or Boston.

Unsuccessful attempts to secure steamship connection between Charleston and the North in the 1830's were followed in the next decade by the establishment of Charleston-New York service maintained by the steamers *Southerner* (built in 1846), *Northerner*, *James Adger*, *Marion*, and *Nashville*.<sup>21</sup>

## II

Although the planters had depended primarily on the waterways for transportation, and water travel was less arduous than travel overland, nevertheless, the Low-Country families did use the roads locally and began to venture farther and farther from home. They sent supplies and servants to near-by pineland and sea-island retreats in ox-carts and carry-alls; they traveled on horseback and in carriages of all kinds from buggies, chaises and sulkies to "chariettes" and coaches. After 1800, as Samuel Dubose recalled, carriages became more common, cumbersome and costly.<sup>22</sup> The average cost of these carriages, which had Venetian blinds at the glass in every panel and required four horses to pull them, was \$1,000.

It was at this time that Mrs. Floride Calhoun and her family made frequent trips up to Pendleton District and even all the way to Newport in her coach with its four grey horses driven by a liveried English coachman.<sup>23</sup> In less style, John Laurens North and his wife drove up to Pendleton in a chaise.<sup>24</sup> The presence of these equipages in the village, in the course of time, began to attract attention and comment. George W. Featherstonhaugh, the English traveler, noted on August 20, 1836 "eight or ten nice-looking carriages" at the Episcopal Church.<sup>25</sup> A writer in the *Keowee Courier* of May 8, 1891, describing Pendleton in the 1840's, mentions "the magnificent coaches and the elegant spans of horses that whirled up the dust in the streets."<sup>26</sup>

There were many practical difficulties and hardships confronting the planter families who traveled in their own vehicles

<sup>21</sup> Wallace, *Hist. of S. C.*, III, 8.

<sup>22</sup> S. Dubose and F. A. Porcher, *Contribution to Hist. of Huguenots of S. C.* (New York, 1887), p. 79.

<sup>23</sup> Col. W. Pinckney Starke's account of Calhoun's early life, in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," *American Historical Association Report*, 1899, II (Washington, 1900), 83-84.

<sup>24</sup> Reminiscences of Sarah Edith Ann Smith Mills (Transcript, South Caroliniana Library, Columbia), pages not numbered.

<sup>25</sup> *A Canoe Voyage up the Minnay Sotor* (London, 1847), II, 269.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in R. N. Bracket, ed., *Old Stone Church* (Columbia, 1905), p. 184.

but they were undaunted by them and overcame them somewhat by the cooperative and leisurely manner of travel that many of them employed. To reach Orangeburg, the "first land wave," seventy miles from Charleston, between sun-up and sun-down and thus avoid the miasma of the swamps, through which they must travel, eight or ten families would station their carriages at eight or ten-mile intervals.<sup>27</sup> By driving rapidly and changing horses and carriages at each station, the occupants of each carriage would reach Orangeburg before nightfall; and by repeating the process the entire party could be united, and, when the carriages were all brought up, start off again at a slower pace. The Legaré Family took four or five days to drive to Aiken.<sup>28</sup> Each family would probably have its own carriage accompanied by baggage-wagons and out-riders, often to the number of three or four vehicles and eight or ten horses, and attended by several slaves as they made their way alone, or in cavalcade with other families, to the mountains and springs, stopping frequently to visit relatives and friends or put up at public places.<sup>29</sup> John Singleton, of Midway Plantation, Sumter District, rode in his coach for three weeks in July, 1818, to reach Sweet Springs, Virginia; and returned by way of Staunton, Richmond, Fayetteville, and Charleston, a journey of some 750 miles over rocky mountain roads and corduroy swamp roads.<sup>30</sup> Mrs. L. A. Taveau informed her son that she would soon leave Asheville for Greenville if she could get a horse to hire in place of "Bill," who was done for and expected to die.<sup>31</sup> James Silk Buckingham wrote of a lady at the hotel in Columbia who was on her way to spend the summer in Kentucky, which she and her family intended to make in their two carriages by easy stages of twenty or thirty miles a day.<sup>32</sup> At the end of the three-day journey to Columbia their four horses were so "knocked up by the heat . . . and the heaviness of the roads" that she had to sell them "at great sacrifice" and buy four fresh ones.

In addition to their own vehicles the planters also used the public stages that early began to provide service between the

<sup>27</sup> *Historical and Descriptive Review of the State of South Carolina* (Charleston, 1884), III, 255.

<sup>28</sup> Harry Worcester Smith, *Life and Sport in Aiken and Those Who Made It* (New York, 1935), p. 4.

<sup>29</sup> J. M. Richardson, *History of Greenville County* (Atlanta, 1930), p. 76; S. S. Crittenden, *Greenville Century Book*, (Greenville, 1903), p. 45.

<sup>30</sup> Perceval Reniers, *The Springs of Virginia. Life, Love and Death at the Waters, 1775-1900* (Chapel Hill, 1941), pp. 48-49.

<sup>31</sup> Mrs. L. A. Taveau to A. L. Taveau, Asheville, Sept. 2, 1839, in *Augustin Louis Taveau Papers* (Duke University Library).

<sup>32</sup> *Slave States of America* (London, 1842), II, 11.

larger cities. Continuous service was maintained by stage lines over the post road between Boston and New Orleans by way of New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Richmond, Raleigh, Columbia, Augusta, Mobile; or by way of Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, Brunswick, Tallahassee.<sup>33</sup> The Rev. Dr. Samuel Gilman, who became pastor of the First Unitarian Church of Charleston in 1819, traveled from Boston to Charleston in eleven days and nights.<sup>34</sup> William Faux, the English farmer-traveler, was two days going from Charleston to Columbia in June, 1819.<sup>35</sup> He thus records the progress of his trip, for which he paid \$15:

At four this morning we left the city by the mail, four in hand, and drove on a team-boat, worked by eight horses, by which we were ferried over the Ashley river . . . We soon entered what seemed to be an interminable forest, and rode twenty-eight miles to breakfast . . . [That night] we slept and supped at a farm-house, on roast leg of pork hot, price for all, one dollar . . .

This [next] day's journey of eighty miles lies through a valley of sand, nearly on a level with the sea, and without any hills, stones or pebbles on its surface. Roused at two this morning . . . A little before sunset . . . we crossed the fine river Wateree, a little below its falls and rocks.

Early travel by stage-coach, as well as by private carriage, was not only slow and expensive but also uncomfortable and hazardous. The coaches, although strongly built and low-swung on strong leather straps acting as springs, were subject to great strain due to the condition of the roads and to overloading.<sup>36</sup> Mud, sand, rocks, stumps, and holes had to be "encompassed;" curves, grades, and streams had to be "negotiated." The result was that conveyances often had to be helped on by sheer manpower and as often broke down, while sometimes they overturned on the road or were swept away when crossing an unbridged stream at the ford, thus imperiling the lives of the passengers and carrying some to their death. Drunken and unscrupulous stage drivers added to the hazards. Julian A. Selby described an accident, that occurred during a trip to Columbia in 1837.<sup>37</sup> The stage overturned, spilling passengers and baggage and causing some confusion, if no serious injuries or long delay,

<sup>33</sup> Hunt, *Life in America*, pp. 51-52; Howard Douglas Dozier, *A History of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad* (Boston, 1920), pp. 67-68, citing the *Charleston Courier*, Dec. 21, 1839.

<sup>34</sup> Mrs. St. Julien Ravenel, *Charleston, the Place and the People* (New York, 1907), pp. 432-433.

<sup>35</sup> *Memorable Days in America* (London, 1823), pp. 50-53.

<sup>36</sup> Hunt, *Life in America*, p. 53; Mrs. Anne Royall, *Southern Tour* (Washington, 1830-1831), II, 99.

<sup>37</sup> *Memorabilia and Anecdotal Reminiscences of Columbia, South Carolina, and Incidents Connected Therewith* (Columbia, 1905), pp. 7-8.

in the process of extricating the ladies, righting the coach and repacking the baggage.

The Low-Country planters were less interested in improved roads than the Up-Country folk but they became interested as their travels took them into the Up-Country and as they became concerned with reviving Charleston's declining prosperity by recapturing the trade that was being drained off to its rivals. They had a part in the program of road building begun by the State in 1819 under the supervision of the Board of Public Works, Joel R. Poinsett, chairman, and later of Superintendent Abram Blanding.<sup>38</sup> Despite its disappointing results in the way of tolls and trade, it did provide a system of turnpikes. Other turnpikes were constructed by chartered companies and individuals. The even more wretched old roads in most districts continued to be used by many; but the new roads were put to considerable use by both planters and stage lines, which were providing more extensive and regular service and carrying more passengers. The Charleston-Columbia trip was reduced to eighteen hours and the fare to ten dollars. By 1843 there were nineteen lines in South Carolina, nine of them running daily between the principal cities. Carriages and stages, as well as boats, continued to be relied upon after the advent of the railroad, both as adjuncts and as competitors.

### III

Planters were among those who promoted and used the first railroads. This was true both of those planters who had moved up the river valleys into the Piedmont and needed improved transportation to meet the competition of the still newer cotton lands of the Southwest, and of those planters who remained in the Low Country proper and were concerned with Charleston's declining trade. Charleston took the initiative in the promotion of the South Carolina Canal and Railroad Company, chartered in 1827, and its railroad from Charleston to Hamburg that was completed in 1833 for a distance of 136 miles at an initial cost of \$951,148.<sup>39</sup> The road early began to attract passenger traffic from a public at first curious, then cautious until safety measures were taken after the first locomotive accident, and then reg-

<sup>38</sup> WPA, Writers Program, *South Carolina. A Guide to the Palmetto State* (New York, 1941), pp. 83-85; Wallace, II, 402-404; Thomas Cooper and David J. McCord, eds., *Statutes at Large of South Carolina* (Columbia, 1836-1841), VI, 124-128, 189, 368, XI, 499.

<sup>39</sup> William H. Clark, *Railroads and Rivers. The Story of Inland Transportation* (Boston, 1939), 78ff.; Samuel M. Derrick, *Centennial History of the South Carolina Railroad* (Columbia, 1930), p. 58.

ular patrons. Where the tri-weekly two-seated stage running between Charleston and Hamburg had carried an average of about fifty passengers a month, the railroad, during the six months ending December 16, 1835, carried 15,559 passengers, an average of more than 2500 a month, and took in \$53,819.66 from ticket sales.<sup>40</sup> Despite the efforts of its first two presidents, William Aiken and Elias Horry, and its ardent Charleston supporters, the South Carolina Railroad did not have the hoped-for results in drawing trade away from Savannah. It took a number of years of operation for the road to attain moderate success, which only came after the expenditure of additional sums for technical improvements, such as replacing the original piles with embankments and the iron-stripped wooden rails with iron ones, and the elimination of the inclined plane at Aiken, and entrance into Augusta in 1852.

The completion of the Charleston and Hamburg merely supplemented the existing means of transportation. A party traveling from Columbia to Charleston in February, 1837, used various means.<sup>41</sup> Some took the steamer at Granby on the Congaree and reached Charleston by way of the Santee Canal, while the others went by stage to Branchville, where they got on the train, which consisted of passenger coaches with short seats running cross-wise and a footboard for the conductor on the outside, and some short, wood-frame freight cars with cloth-covered sides. Pendleton residents could drive to Aiken and take the train to Charleston.<sup>42</sup> The Columbia branch was completed in 1842. The traveler Raumer making the trip from Charleston in May, 1844, paid \$6.50 for his ticket.<sup>43</sup> The visiting British clergyman, the Reverend George Lewis, wrote that it was "a great blessing, shortening the misery of a journey through a country so uninviting and unwholesome."<sup>44</sup> According to a schedule in June, 1849, a train left Charleston at 10 A.M., Branchville at 1:45 P.M. and arrived at Columbia at 5 P.M.<sup>45</sup> The mail and passenger train left Columbia at 6 A.M., arriving at Branchville at 9:20 and at Charleston at 5:05 P.M. The train from Charleston reached Aiken at 5:05 P.M. and the train from Aiken left at 6:20 A.M. and reached Branchville at 9:20. The Kingsville-Camden branch,

<sup>40</sup> Dunbar, *Travel in America*, p. 1009.

<sup>41</sup> Selby, *Memorabilia*, p. 6.

<sup>42</sup> Mills *Reminiscences*.

<sup>43</sup> F. von Raumer, *America and the American People* (New York, 1846), p. 422.

<sup>44</sup> *Impressions of America and the American Churches* (Edinburgh, 1845), pp. 112-114. This would have pleased Buckingham, who had a hot stage ride from Branchville in 1839 (*Slave States*, II, 3ff.).

<sup>45</sup> *Columbia Daily Telegraph*, June 7, 1849.

projected in 1836 to free the inhabitants of Camden and the Wateree from dependence on the slow-moving river traffic, was completed by 1848.<sup>46</sup>

In the meantime, Charlestonians were taking interest in and being served by other railroads to the north and west. By 1838 the Wilmington and Raleigh Railroad, organized in 1836, was maintaining service between Charleston and Weldon, N. C. by a system of boats, cars, and stages, and in March, 1840, it formally opened its main line of 161 miles to Weldon with a celebration in Wilmington at which a number of South Carolinians were present.<sup>47</sup> This line made connection with other lines which made possible a kind of through service between Charleston and the North. By other combinations of railroads, steamers and stages one could go from Charleston to Cincinnati or New Orleans.<sup>48</sup>

Other railroads were being projected and constructed within South Carolina. The Wilmington and Manchester, chartered in 1846, was opened in 1854 from Eagle Island, opposite Wilmington, to Kingsville on the Charleston and Hamburg, with which it sought but was unable to make favorable traffic arrangements.<sup>49</sup> Charlestonians planned and financed a road from Charleston to Florence where it would meet the Wilmington and Manchester.<sup>50</sup> Chartered in 1851 with a capital stock of \$2,000,000, this North-eastern Railroad was built, at a cost of \$21,000 for each of its 102 miles, across the Santee Canal and through a sparsely-settled country, to be opened in 1857. Charlestonians also subscribed to the Cheraw and Darlington Railroad constructed in 1854-1855 between Cheraw and Florence.<sup>51</sup> A railroad, with a branch from Yorkville to Chester, was opened between Columbia and Charlotte in 1852; the Columbia-Greenville Railroad, with its Laurens, Abbeville, and Anderson branches, was completed in 1853; the Charleston and Savannah, chartered in 1853, was built and opened in the fall of 1860.<sup>52</sup>

Traveling by railroad, though advancing, was still uncertain, inconvenient and somewhat expensive. State Senator R. F. W. Allston had an almost tragic experience in going to Columbia

<sup>46</sup> Clark, *Railroads and Rivers*, p. 82. As late as 1834 some boats were taking from eighteen days to three months to reach Charleston from Camden.

<sup>47</sup> Dozier, *Atlantic Coast Line Railroad*, pp. 59-61.

<sup>48</sup> Dunbar, *Travel in America*, pp. 1122-1123 and n., 1124 and nn.

<sup>49</sup> Dozier, *Atlantic Coast Line Railroad*, p. 76.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82 and n.; William L. King, *The Newspaper Press of Charleston* (Charleston, 1872), pp. 115-116.

on the train in November, 1846.<sup>53</sup> Beyond Orangeburg the wheels of the car in which he was riding and of the one next behind it slipped off the rails and the cars bumped along in danger of being dashed to pieces. The passengers and conductors, having no way to notify the engineer, were in great distress, when fortunately the engineer saw the last car, which had become detached, and stopped the train. No one was injured, not even a passenger who jumped, and they then went on, crowded into one undamaged car.

Sarah Mills recalled one of her trips as a school-girl from Pendleton to Charleston in December, 1852.<sup>54</sup> She drove to Honea Path and there took the train but had to get off at Alston, because the track had been washed out by a freshet, and be driven in a private conveyance about twenty miles to Columbia.

Henry W. Ravenel recorded some of his trips from Aiken down to the family plantation by way of these railroads.<sup>55</sup>

We are again at Pooshee [he wrote on February 10, 1860] having arrived here this morning about 7 A. M. We left our house . . . yesterday about 8 A. M., took the cars at 9; at Branchville took the Columbia train at 1 P. M., reached Kingsville about 3 P. M.—then we took the Wilmington and Manchester train and reached Florence at 7 P. M.—remained there until 2:30 A. M., and then took the Northeastern Railroad for Bonneau's station, where we arrived at 6 A. M., having travelled about 220 miles—thus, Aiken to Kingsville about 100 miles=\$4.00 a seat, Kingsville to Florence about 60 miles=\$2.38,—Florence to Bonneau's about 66 miles=\$2.75 a seat. I paid for myself, Mary and Amelia, including supper and lodging at Florence, \$24.75, which is about \$6 more than all the actual expenses of the route through Charleston.

If railroad travel proved too taxing, the planter could still fall back on the means of locomotion, which, as one writer said, he maintained on his own premises; namely, boats and carriages.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Easterby, ed., *The South Carolina Rice Plantation*, pp. 95-96.

<sup>54</sup> Mills Reminiscences.

<sup>55</sup> Henry W. Ravenel Private Journal (South Caroliniana Library, Columbia).

<sup>56</sup> Anon., "Sketches of South Carolina, No. 2," *Knickerbocker Magazine*, XXI (January, 1843), 39.

## CALHOUN: AN INTERPRETATION

CHARLES M. WILTSE

## I

When the bitterly contested subtreasury bill was before the Senate early in 1838, Clay took occasion to upbraid Calhoun for his apostasy. Calhoun replied in kind, and Philip Hone, popular Whig merchant and former Mayor of New York, watching the scene from a seat on the Senate floor, noted a greater "degree of acrimony and ill-nature" than the occasion warranted. Hone was ready to excuse the South Carolina Senator, however, on the ground that he was unusually sensitive, "like all men whose position is doubtful in their own minds."<sup>1</sup>

Hone was a shrewd observer and a good judge of human nature, but he was utterly wrong about Calhoun. Whatever his faults, however great his errors, Calhoun's position was never doubtful in his own mind. He sometimes arrived at his conclusions with baffling rapidity, but the most careful and mature reflection never shook his faith in his own logic. Throughout a lifetime of controversy, as he once confessed with masterly understatement to a friend, he remained "a good deal attached" to his own opinions, and "not so much disposed, perhaps, to take advice" as he ought to be.<sup>2</sup> His insufferable cocksureness made enemies of men who should have been his friends; but it was also the measure of his leadership, for in times of stress and turmoil, men who doubt themselves tend to fall in behind those who have no doubts.

The quality of his intellect led Calhoun almost inevitably to generalize from his experience, and to set up his generalizations in the form of universal laws. His unshakable self-confidence, his unquestioning certainty that he was right, led him to evaluate the actions of others and in large measure to determine his own on the basis of these general principles. His own political philosophy, in short, was a framework upon which he hung his reading of history and in terms of which he interpreted the economic and political forces of his time. By the same token it is also a pattern which gives consistency and direction to a career that appeared to his enemies and often to his friends to be erratic

<sup>1</sup> Allan Nevins, ed., *Diary of Philip Hone* (New York, 1927), 304.

<sup>2</sup> Calhoun to V. Maxcy, Sept. 11, 1830 (Maxcy papers, New York Public Library).

and without principle. His course was not determined by simple reactions to people and events, but was rather derived from a system of philosophy into which people and events had first been neatly fitted and arranged. Calhoun's career will become more meaningful if we examine the major tenets of this system, and apply them as he did to the world in which he lived.

Calhoun belonged to an age of revolution, of intellectual ferment, of political and economic experimentation. He was born before the close of the American struggle for independence. When he was a precocious lad of six his father opposed ratification of the new Constitution of the United States, because it gave too much power to a central government. The French Revolution was the overshadowing fact of his youth. He was nearing maturity when Virginia rebelled against the autocracy of the Alien and Sedition Acts, and he had already entered preparatory school when the explosive force of that rebellion carried Thomas Jefferson to the presidency. He was in college when Bonaparte completed the transition from successful military commander to First Consul to Emperor, and we know from his letters that the young Carolinian watched the process and its aftermath with interest and concern.<sup>3</sup>

Equally suggestive of conflict and upheaval is Calhoun's early political career. He entered public life at a time when his country was being forced to choose sides in a world-wide struggle for power. He sat in a war Congress and grappled there with the problems of foreign invasion and internal revolt. He saw, and encouraged, the rise of industry in the northern and middle states, but in the process he had ample opportunity to observe the interaction of economic forces and political events. From the vantage point of a Cabinet seat he witnessed the first sectional rift in the smooth surface of the Union, and he recognized the Missouri Compromise for what it was: an internal balance of power. It was an age of wonderful technological advances, which seemed to go hand in hand with crumbling social institutions; an age when active minds went back to fundamentals, and thinking men sought new interpretations of the world order.

Calhoun's own search for first principles undoubtedly began at an early stage of his career, but it was the fall of 1828 before he reduced his findings to orderly and systematic form in the *South Carolina Exposition*. Thenceforth he weighed every public measure in the same scale. He added illustrations from current

<sup>3</sup> J. F. Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," *American Historical Association Report*, 1899, II (Washington, 1900), 100.

politics or from history as he went along, but he found nothing to justify any basic modification in the general thesis. When his theory appeared in definitive form in the posthumous *Disquisition on Government* it was still essentially the same as it had been in its initial version, save for a greater completeness in its presentation. Like the authors of the *Federalist*, Calhoun drew freely from Hobbes and Harrington and Locke, but the significance of the doctrine thus derived lay not in its 17th century skeleton but in its contemporary dress, and in the use to which it was put.

## II

Government, for Calhoun, was inseparable from human nature, and with respect to neither was he troubled by any Utopian illusions. His major premise, derived from what he called "universal experience," was that man cannot exist without some kind of government. The law of self-preservation requires that we pursue our own interests more assiduously than we pursue the welfare of others. The natural consequence is a tendency to conflict among individuals which would destroy society and make life impossible were it not controlled. The controlling force, whatever form it takes, is government. The powers of government, however, must be exercised by men, and they are therefore liable to abuse because of the same tendency in human nature that makes government necessary. Unless safeguarded in some fashion, the power given to the rulers to prevent injustice and oppression will be used by them to oppress the ruled.

This tendency to abuse of the powers of government could be successfully resisted, in Calhoun's view, only by the internal structure of the government itself. Governments so constructed that the ruled might resist the abuses of the rulers he called limited or constitutional governments. All others were absolute. In neither category did it make any difference whether the ruler was a single individual, an oligarchy, or a majority.

A constitutional government, as Calhoun visualized it, must be based on suffrage; but the right of suffrage alone is not enough to prevent absolutism. By means of popular elections the actual seat of power may be shifted from the rulers to the body of the community, but the abuse of power will not thereby be prevented unless the individual interests of the whole citizen body are the same. Where interests are many and varied, the right of suffrage merely intensifies the tendency to conflict, for each interest strives to gain control of the powers of government as a means of protecting itself. This leads to combinations and

arrangements, until the whole community is divided into two hostile parties.

Indeed, the community would be so divided, even if interests were otherwise the same, by the action of the government alone. To fulfill its purpose government must be strong. It must, therefore, employ officers, collect taxes, and spend money in numerous ways. It is difficult if not impossible to collect taxes equally from the whole community, and they are never spent in equal proportions. The community will thus be divided into opposing interests by the fiscal action of the government alone. The majority, moved by the same self-interest as the individuals who compose it, will inevitably seek to aggrandize itself at the expense of the minority. The fact that, by means of the ballot, the two may change places only intensifies the tendency to conflict and disorder.

Suffrage, then, is not enough to prevent the abuse of power. There must be some other provision which will prevent any single interest or combination of interests from gaining exclusive control of the machinery of government. Calhoun's solution of the problem was the theory of the concurrent majority. Where the action of the government might affect the various portions of the community unequally, he would give to each portion, through its own majority, either a concurrent voice in the making of the laws, or a veto on their execution. To act at all the government would thus require the consent of the various interest groups of which it was composed. Its guiding principle would therefore be compromise, whereas the only principle underlying absolute governments is force.

Such, in broad outline, is Calhoun's system of political philosophy. The dogma of state sovereignty, with its correlatives of nullification and secession, was but an application of this more general doctrine, restated in terms of familiar American institutions. He found a classical basis for his theory in the separate representation of patricians and plebeians in ancient Rome, under a system that gave to each a veto on the acts of government, and a more recent illustration in the balance of classes in British parliamentary practice. In his own country he found that the basic distinction between interests, though still along economic lines, followed an essentially geographical pattern. They were not stratified as classes or estates, but were localized as sections or regions in terms of the prevalent source of livelihood, this in turn being based on climate and natural resources. The States were most nearly representative of this division, so

it was to the States, in their character as members of a confederacy, that Calhoun accorded a concurrent veto power.

The controversies of the preceding three decades pointed the way so clearly to this particular application that it would have been the part of political wisdom to use it even if logic had directed otherwise. Ever since the Alien and Sedition Acts, and the countering resolutions from the legislatures of Kentucky and Virginia, a debate as to the true construction of the Constitution had been in progress. The Virginia school, for which both Jefferson and Madison had argued, held the instrument to be in fact a compact among independent sovereignties. From this it followed, under accepted principles of international law, that each party to the compact had a right to judge of its own powers, and to interpose to arrest a patent violation of the agreement. Calhoun's own intensive study during the summer and early fall of 1828 when he was preparing to write the *Exposition* convinced him of the validity of the compact theory, and served as his point of departure in his subsequent writings and speeches on the question. The Roman Tribune had been established by agreement between warring factions. First the temporal lords and then the commons derived their equal power in Britain from contracts, signed and witnessed in due form. The concurrent veto—the great conservative principle of a society—did not just happen, but came into existence to protect each of the parties to a compact from violation by the others.

Having fitted the Constitution of the United States into its proper niche in his political philosophy, it was no difficult matter for Calhoun to reason that the House of Representatives was the organ of the numerical majority, but that the Senate, with its representation by States, was intended to give a concurrent voice to the various interests that made up the body politic. His own function in the Senate was thus to maintain the interests, economic and political, of South Carolina, and by extension the interests of the whole region of which the State was a part. He could change sides on major issues, he could change party allegiance, he could pursue a seemingly erratic course on any phase of public policy, and still be entirely consistent with his own political philosophy. He represented a minority interest, threatened with extinction by the action of a government in control of a numerical majority. Nor was it alone for South Carolina's benefit that he asserted her sovereignty against the weight of numbers. It was also for the good of the whole; for in that way alone, so he believed, could the Union endure.

## III

The major tenets of this theory of the state—that governments tend to become absolute, that rulers tend to abuse their powers, that the honors and emoluments of government are in themselves enough to fix party lines and precipitate a struggle for power—all of these propositions were deductions from the nature of man. But they were far more than that. They were also obvious facts that anyone could see for himself in the day-to-day operations of the government of the United States. So clear were they to Calhoun that they gave validity to a theory otherwise abstract, and justified extremes that a man of less positive convictions might have hesitated to invoke.

History may be interpreted in many ways, according to the preconceptions of the historian, the material he elects to accept, and the sources he chooses to ignore. The age of Jackson may, indeed, have been the forerunner of later social movements in which the welfare of the common man was pitted against entrenched privilege and greed. Certainly Amos Kendall and Francis Blair, among the ablest if not the most truthful journalists of the century, strove mightily to provide the contemporary voter (and incidentally, posterity) with just such a picture. But to Calhoun, and unquestionably to a majority of the middle class of his day, Jackson's career was one unbroken march toward despotism. It proved every point in Calhoun's political theory, offered new and pertinent illustrations of the nature of the governmental process, and justified the most vigorous forms of opposition. Let us strip the Jackson era of its supporting propaganda, forget the idealism of the glosses that have been written on it, and look at it as nearly as we may with Calhoun's eyes.

The tools of power were ready to Jackson's hand when that extraordinary man took office, and his political lieutenants were thoroughly skilled in their use. The tools had been thoughtfully provided by unwitting rivals going back for nearly a decade. The four-year tenure law of 1820, conceived by the political genius William H. Crawford, was a potent engine for securing partisans. Under this innocent-looking statute district attorneys, officers of the customs service, registers of the land offices, naval agents, and a few less numerous officials were made removable at the will of the President. Their terms of office, moreover, were specifically limited to four years, so that as each presidential election rolled around, virtually the entire civilian personnel of the Federal Government would have to seek reappointment. The more numerous group of postal employees already served for

limited periods, defined by the contracts under which the mails were carried.

The four-year law was in fact one element in a closely knit political machine that Crawford had built up on the foundations of the old Jefferson-Burr alliance, and which was expected to make him President in 1824. When ill-health thwarted Crawford's hopes, Martin Van Buren succeeded to control of the machine, which he deftly turned to the service of Andrew Jackson. John Quincy Adams, meanwhile, though he had less than a third of the popular vote, had been elected President early in 1825 by a House of Representatives in which tariff sentiment predominated. Immediately thereafter the leading exponent of the protective policy received the first place in the Cabinet, and the President propounded a legislative program whose maximum benefits would accrue to those states to which he owed his election. He did his best to divert former Crawford partisans to his own cause by judicious reappointments under the four-year law; and in the skillful hands of Secretary of State Henry Clay, the printing and other public contracts were given out with a view to Adams' re-election.

It was not the officeholders, however, but the beneficiaries of the tariff who made up the core of Adams' strength, and shortly before the election of 1828 he prepared to insure their loyalty with still higher duties. Calhoun was already in opposition, since his state and section were the primary victims of the administration policy. He had allied himself perforce with the Jacksonians, even though it brought him into the same camp as the bulk of the Crawford Radicals, his bitter foes of a few years earlier. Calhoun and other Southern followers of Jackson tried to block this new attempt to increase the tariff by introducing provisions deliberately obnoxious to Adams' New England supporters; but when the critical moment arrived Van Buren, Eaton, Benton, and others among the Jackson inner circle voted to pass the measure they had pledged themselves to defeat. The strength of the tariff interest had not been lost upon the Democratic managers, and with the election approaching in the fall, they made their own peace with the manufacturers. They courted both sides and won.

It was at this point that Calhoun wrote the *South Carolina Exposition*. To him, the relation between the dominant economic interest and the partisan majority was clear. In subtle, indirect, but entirely legal ways, the latter had been bought by the former. The government was already in the exclusive control of the

stronger interest, and the destruction of the weaker, which was also his own, must inevitably follow, unless Jackson chose to cast the influence of his vast personal popularity into the opposite scale.

Jackson, surrounded as he was by some of the ablest party strategists ever produced in this or any other country, preferred to consolidate his power. His methods were simple, direct, and effective. He began by reappointing to office only known and proven partisans, and by removing those who were not whole-hearted in his cause in favor of men whose personal loyalty was undeviating. When the process of patronage distribution was well advanced, in December 1829, a New York paper devoted to Van Buren's interests announced its support of Jackson for a second term, and of Van Buren for the succession. From the beginning of his campaign, Jackson had been committed to a single term, but before another year was out his candidacy for re-election was acknowledged and a new "official" newspaper had been established in the capital to advance it. The *Washington Globe*, edited publicly by Blair and behind the scenes by Kendall, became thereafter an almost irresistible vehicle for party propaganda. Its financial support came from office-holders, who were required to subscribe for it—and pay in advance—or resign their places to men who would.<sup>4</sup>

Another important milestone on Jackson's march to autocracy was the Maysville Road veto in 1830. The action was received with initial approbation in the South because it appeared to put an end to federal spending for public works. It could therefore be used as an argument for reducing the revenue, which meant the tariff. But it presently appeared, as other internal improvement bills received the President's approbation, that the question was still open. The only real change was that the use of public funds for improvement purposes was made subject in each case to the personal judgment of the executive. The Maysville Road was in Kentucky, whose legislature had sent Henry Clay to the Senate. Highways and canals in more compliant states might perhaps prove to be for national purposes.

Year after year McDuffie introduced into the House bills for tariff reduction in accordance with what he and Calhoun believed to be Jackson's pre-election pledge to South Carolina; and year after year they came to nothing. The vote was manipulated by the same economic interest that had elected Adams and now supported Jackson. The cost of manufactured products rose, the

<sup>4</sup> B. P. Poore, *Perley's Reminiscences* (New York, 1886), I, 104.

price of cotton fell, and Southern leaders, particularly the younger group in South Carolina, threatened revolt. So in July 1831 Calhoun restated his theory, with embellishments looking to positive action. He pointed out that although a substantial minority believed the tariff to be unconstitutional, the majority continued to pursue that policy to the economic ruin of the cotton states. So he claimed for the interest he represented a concurrent veto, but at the same time expressed his great preference for an adjustment of the point at issue by Congress.

Again the national legislature refused to make concessions, and in that refusal gave further evidence of the validity of Calhoun's premises. For there was actually strong sentiment in many parts of the country for tariff reduction, but to yield to it would have been to concede a political triumph to Calhoun. This neither Jackson nor Clay would do; so at the risk of civil war the Jacksonians and the National Republicans voted together to maintain a prohibitive scale of duties, lest the pretensions of a rival be advanced. Throughout the whole controversy the actions, motives, and purposes of Calhoun and his followers were deliberately misrepresented and distorted by Blair and his satellite editors to arouse public indignation against South Carolina and her leaders.

The issue was joined in the fall of 1832. Calhoun stated the case for state action to arrest the tariff in a letter to Governor Hamilton late in August. It was timed immediately to precede state elections whose outcome would determine whether South Carolina would interpose her sovereignty to restrain the protective system. Calhoun showed how the majority always has an interest in enlarging the powers of government, and how human nature itself would impel the rulers to oppress the ruled, unless they were in some manner prevented from so doing. Majority rule was in fact only rule by the stronger interest, whose cupidity and ambition would inevitably hasten the government along the road to absolutism. The only barrier lay in the original sovereignty of the states.

To those who lost money by the protective policy the argument was convincing. The Nullifiers won their two-thirds majority. The convention was duly called, and the tariffs of 1828 and 1832 were declared null and void within the limits of South Carolina.

Jackson's answer to nullification was a proclamation explicitly claiming for the Federal Government—which is to say, for the majority—precisely the powers that George III had

claimed over the colonies in 1776: the power to judge of its own limits, to pass laws within those limits, and to compel obedience to those laws. The partisan majority then ratified these claims by voting to the President full control over army, navy, militia, and for all practical purpose public treasury, any or all of which might be used to assist in the collection of import duties in the rebellious state. An act, Calhoun called it, to "enforce robbery by murder." He did not doubt that Jackson, like Macbeth, saw in his dreams the vision of a crown.<sup>5</sup>

The compromise of 1833 put an end for the time being to the controversy between South Carolina and the general government, but it impeded not at all Jackson's progress toward undisputed power. In the summer of 1832 the President had vetoed a bill renewing the charter of the Bank of the United States. The Bank threw its influence to Clay in the fall election, and for this political opposition, Jackson undertook to destroy the "monster of corruption" without waiting for its charter to expire. In the fall of 1833, with no economic justification and the flimsiest of legal pretexts, the public funds were removed from the custody of the Bank and placed with various State institutions where they were directly under executive control. Two Secretaries of the Treasury were dismissed before one who would sign the necessary order was found, and the action was deliberately timed to precede the meeting of Congress, so that it could not be blocked.

In the Senate, where Calhoun and Clay had temporarily joined forces against the administration, the removal of the deposits was denounced as the ultimate act of tyranny. Clay read from Plutarch the description of Caesar entering the Roman Treasury sword in hand. Calhoun showed that whatever the motive, the result in this case was the same. For the Roman had seized the public treasure to buy partisans with which to consolidate his power; and the public funds in the pet banks were being recklessly loaned out to speculators who were thereby converted into partisans. The Senate voted a resolution censuring the President. Jackson replied with a sharp protest, which the Senate refused to receive.

As of the spring of 1834 the record, in the eyes of Calhoun and those who thought with him, was something like this: First the patronage had been perverted, by instituting the general practice of removal from office without cause—the principle of the Albany Regency that "to the victors belong the spoils." The

<sup>5</sup> Calhoun to Samuel D. Ingham, Jan. 16, 1833 (Jackson papers, 2nd Series, Library of Congress).

total number of employees and pensioners of the Federal Government had doubled since 1825, and expenses exclusive of payments on the public debt, had likewise doubled, although the population increase was no more than 25 percent. The revenue had been enormously increased in the same interval, largely through a form of taxation which fell unequally on the different sections of the country, and the President had been given by a subservient Congress the power to perpetuate this inequality by military force. A large and unscrupulous press had been suborned to do the bidding of the party leaders. The public money had been removed without adequate reason or even plausible excuse from the depository established and safe-guarded by law, and had been placed in a group of favored banks where it was under the exclusive control of the executive. This money was being used by the banks that held it, not as a deposit but as capital, and the amount of it was loaned out three and four times over, the profits going to the pet banks and the loans going to partisans, present or prospective. Yet when the Senate condemned the final act of power, though it had sanctioned everything that went before, the President, in language skillfully chosen to inflame popular prejudices, accused the Senate of violating his rights. In the Cherokee case two years earlier Jackson had ignored a decision of the Supreme Court. Who but the most blinded partisan could fail to see in this challenge to the Senate the first step toward subverting the legislative arm as well?

All this would have been more than enough to convince men less predisposed in that direction than Calhoun that the Constitution was in fact a dead letter and Andrew Jackson a dictator of unrestrained power. But there was more to come. Jackson decreed that Martin Van Buren should be his successor, and a party convention made up of officeholders and pensioners unanimously ratified the choice. There was no subtlety about it. The President was openly and shamelessly designating his successor, and would use all the vast patronage at his command to insure the election of his favorite. To Calhoun it was as "open and palpable usurpation of the supreme executive power" as though it had been brought about by military force.<sup>6</sup> Force had in fact been threatened for the collection of a relatively trifling debt from France, and that matter still hung fire early in 1836 when Van Buren's cause looked none too bright. So Jackson indulged once more in vigorous saber-rattling, until Calhoun thought him

<sup>6</sup> Calhoun to W. F. Gordon, May 22, 1835, A. C. Gordon, *William Fitzhugh Gordon* (New York, 1909), pp. 297-9.

bent upon war to justify himself in accepting a third term.<sup>7</sup> Napoleon was not the first who had risen to imperial estate through successful foreign war, nor was he likely to be the last.

Jackson also decreed that the resolution of censure should be expunged from the Senate Journal, and the faithful Benton, himself designated for the presidential succession at one remove, undertook the task. He was not "single-handed and alone" for long. The party machinery, reaching down to the smallest hamlet and out to the remotest reaches of a far-flung domain, was set in motion. Senators who had voted to condemn the President were marked for the slaughter, and those members of their State Legislatures who had supported them were the preliminary victims. Against each of these local representatives a campaign was waged on his home ground, with all the persuasions that a powerful and wealthy central government could command. In half a dozen states the political complexion of the legislature was changed, and Senators were "instructed" to expunge the hated judgment. Some obeyed, others resigned; but the result was the same. In less than three years the Senate majority was reversed, and Jackson was vindicated in January 1837. Not without reason Calhoun called it "the melancholy evidence of a broken spirit, ready to bow at the feet of power."<sup>8</sup>

#### IV

To a generation accustomed to a liberal evaluation of the Jackson era, this picture will seem exaggerated and overdrawn. It was nevertheless the picture that a substantial and talented portion of King Andrew's subjects saw. Calhoun's writings and speeches only add more detail to the skeleton presented here. Substantially the same view will be found in the columns of Duff Green's *United States Telegraph*, of Richard Craillé's *Richmond Jefferson and Virginia Times*, and in many other anti-Jackson papers. It was ably and clearly expressed by many prominent actors on the scene, like John Tyler of Virginia, George Poindexter of Mississippi, Willie P. Mangum of North Carolina, even by Clay and Webster themselves. In literary form Judge Beverley Tucker's novel, the *Partisan Leader*, first published by Duff Green in 1836, traces the same forces through three hypothetical Van Buren administrations, and might have come even closer to prophesy than it did had not the panic of 1837 put an abrupt end, for the time being, to the hand-picked Jackson dynasty.

<sup>7</sup> Calhoun to L. W. Tazewell, Jan. 24, 1836 (Calhoun papers, Library of Congress).

<sup>8</sup> *Register of Debates*, 24th Congress, 2nd Session, 418.

Calhoun's analysis of the political process was complete long before he gave his own support to Van Buren's program in the special session of 1837. The administration, through the normal reaction of the average man to economic catastrophe, had been thrown into the minority, and Calhoun knew that the interests of South Carolina were no safer in the hands of the Clay-Webster combination than they had been under Jackson or Adams. As the advocate of a special interest it was clearly his duty to go with whichever party was most likely to advance his cause.

The theory, to repeat, was fully matured before Jackson left office, every tenet of it having been in one way or another confirmed by the career of the Hero. It was thereafter a glass through which Calhoun observed the passing scene. The log-cabin-and-hard-cider campaign of 1840 merely showed once more how partisans were lost when the well of patronage ran dry, and were won by promises, however specious. He had reasoned from the start that the struggle for place would tend to become more violent until control changed hands at every election, to be retained at last by force. He saw the partisan majority change with each election from Van Buren's day until his own death in 1850. Believing as he did that the need for new sources of political reward would force the partisan majority to seek new forms of power, he could hardly have been surprised at Polk's venture into aggressive war.

Had Calhoun been less sure of himself, less ready to pursue his own reasoning to the ultimate end, and less ingenious in fitting the facts as he saw them into the pattern as he himself had laid it down, he might perhaps have reached a different explanation of his times, and followed in consequence a different course. Being the type of man he was, and in the environment that was his, like Luther at the Diet of Worms, he could do no other. To him and to a majority of his generation liberty was the most precious possession of mankind. It was for liberty that a revolution had been fought and a new nation established—not to substitute after half a century the absolutism of a successful general for that of a demented British king. History, philosophy, and his own experience taught him that the natural tendency of government was to whittle away the sphere of liberty, and that this tendency could be resisted only by power. Calhoun was simply realist enough to know that the greatest power in any state, next to military might, is the organized power of its economic interests.





